

Successfully Surviving Disasters

Where Do We Go From Here?



Now that your program has an emergency preparedness plan in place, the following key ideas can help you build your next steps. By keeping these in mind, your next steps will ensure that your plan is a living document, not simply another document in a drawer.

Keep emergency preparedness on everyone's agenda. Assure that all members of your program community are aware of and educated about the program's plan. Regularly schedule it on agendas for:

- Staff meetings
- In-service workshops
- Parent meetings
- Policy Council meetings
- Health Services Advisory Committee meetings
- Other community meetings that you attend

Photo by J. Brough Schamp, SECO.



Stay informed. If you know that something may occur, you are better able to prepare for it. Monitor media, research, and national advisories regarding concerns that might affect your community or your program. Have a system for sharing advisories with key staff and parents.

Stay connected. Maintain regular contact with community partners. Develop communication protocols to keep partners informed about any changes to your plan or your program (i.e. staff changes).

Take care of staff. Make sure all staff have their own personal plans. This reduces stress and assures that they are able to focus on the needs of children and families in your program. Recognize that, even though staff may be trained to cope with a disaster, everyone responds differently. Be aware of the signs of stress that staff may experience after the emergency. Make sure there is a plan to support them through this challenging time.

Practice your plan regularly. By learning through doing, all members of the program's community will understand their roles and responsibilities and be able to respond to the situation with greater ease. Reflection after practice will offer community members opportunities to improve the plan, as well.